



Public Service Commission
State of North Dakota

COMMISSIONERS

Susan E. Wefald
President
Bruce Hagen
Leo M. Reinhold

600 E. Boulevard
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0480
Phone 701-328-2400
Toll Free in ND 800-932-2400
FAX 701-328-2410
TDD Relay 800-366-6888

Executive Secretary
Jon H. Mielke

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May 15, 1996

Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 N St NW Rm 222
Washington D C 29554

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

RE: FCC 96-182, In the Matter of Implementation of the Local Competition Provision in the Telecommunications Act of 1996

Dear Secretary:

Enclosed are Comments of the North Dakota Public Service Commission on the Implementation of the Local Competition Provision in the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

We appreciate the opportunity to file comments.

Sincerely,

Illona A. Jeffcoat-Sacco, Director
Public Utilities Division

sdh

Enclosures

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May 15, 1996

Janice Myles
Common Carrier Bureau
1919 N St NW Rm 544
Washington D C 29554

RE: FCC 96-182, In the Matter of Implementation of the Local Competition Provision in the Telecommunications Act of 1996

Dear Ms. Myles:

Enclosed is the diskette containing Comments of the North Dakota Public Service Commission on the Implementation of the Local Competition Provision in the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

Sincerely,


Sharon Helbling
Public Utilities Division

sdh

Enclosures

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**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D. C. 20554**

**In the Matter of
Implementation of the Local Competition
Provisions in the Telecommunications Act
of 1996**

FCC 96-182

CC Docket No. 96-98

COMMENTS BY THE NORTH DAKOTA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

May 14, 1996

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) seeks comments on whether the FCC should adopt general guidelines to assist states in addressing the issues relating to interconnection or whether it should adopt specific standards, thereby providing some universality to the standards and providing states with guidelines for resolving interconnection disputes.

The North Dakota Public Service Commission submits the following general comments.

A wide disparity exists between states in their efforts to open local service to competition.

Some states, upon demands from industry and orders from their legislature, have adopted rules deregulating local service, have taken significant steps toward implementing those rules and have faced real disputes between parties relating to interconnection.

Other states, such as North Dakota, have received no demands to open the local service market and as a result have adopted no rules and have no practical experience in dealing with interconnection issues.

In addition, North Dakota has a limited staff with which to address interconnection and other telecommunication issues. Its Public Utilities staff consists of one director, one engineer and one part time accountant. The Legal Division consists of two attorneys. The staff oversees telecommunications matters along with electricity, gas and siting, among others. The limited staff and the demand of other responsibilities will impair North Dakota's efforts to do a thorough and timely job of resolving the numerous interconnection issues without some specific standards from the FCC.

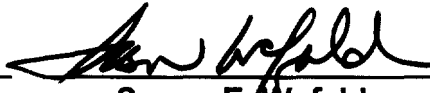
Other states do not need the same level of support and should not be required to conform to strict FCC standards. Those states should be given the option of continuing with their own deregulation efforts, provided those efforts are consistent with the Act.

North Dakota believes that allowing states to proceed without FCC interference will encourage innovative solutions to the interconnection issues, which will benefit all states, but for itself believes that specific standards adopted by the FCC will provide North Dakota with a significant and necessary benefit.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION



Bruce Hagen
Commissioner



Susan E. Wefald
President



Leo M. Reinbold
Commissioner